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HOUSE PASSES AGRICULTURE FUNDING BILL WITH \$5M FOR CRITICAL RESEARCH PRIORITIES IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Legislation Provides Emergency Assistance to Dairy Farmers

Washington, DC {October 7, 2009}- Today, the House of Representatives passed the conference report for the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration Appropriations Act which provides funding for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and related agencies for the upcoming fiscal year. This legislation includes \$2.963 million requested by Rep. Herseth Sandlin for important agriculture-related projects in South Dakota, listed below. This legislation also provides \$2.25 million in funding for the Sun Grant Initiative, administered by SDSU, which was authorized as a federal program through the Farm Bill passed last year. The Sun Grant Initiative conducts important research that holds tremendous potential to improve the domestic supply of renewable energy.

The bill was passed by the House in July and the Senate in August, and differences in the two versions were worked out in a conference committee. Following House passage, it is anticipated that the Senate will agree to the conference report and send it to the President for his signature.

"South Dakota State University is leading the way in conducting vital research that benefits farmers and ranchers across the country and supports our country's efforts to diversify its energy economy," Rep. Herseth Sandlin said. "I'm proud to once again support these projects and look forward to continuing my work with SDSU to advance these priorities that hold so much potential for our state's rural community and the country as a whole."

In addition to funding for South Dakota-specific projects, this legislation provides \$350 million to provide assistance to the nation's dairy farmers who are struggling due to historically low prices,

including \$250 million in direct payments to producers and \$60 million to allow for the purchase of cheese and other dairy products for food banks. Rep. Herseth Sandlin added, "The issue of emergency assistance for dairy farmers was raised during the Rural Issues Forum I held earlier this week with Secretary Vilsack near Bath. I'm pleased that this assistance will ultimately be provided to support our dairy farmers."

Further, this legislation makes cuts in funding requested for the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). Although the President requested \$14.6 million for NAIS, the final version of the bill includes just \$5.3 million. The House version of this legislation included no funding for NAIS while the Senate version provided \$7.3 million.

"I support the decision to cut funding for the National Animal ID program in the Agriculture Appropriations bill for the upcoming fiscal year," Rep. Herseth Sandlin said. "It does not make sense to continue to fund a program that is not achieving the results set out for it when it was first established in 2004. I urge all stakeholders to continue to work with USDA as they try to reach consensus and resolve the many complex issues at hand."

Funding requested by Herseth Sandlin included in the final version of the bill:

\$1.25 Million for Biomass Crop Production research at the Ag Research Service Lab at SDSU. This research will support the development of the domestic fuel ethanol industry by developing new biobased products which, in turn, can improve the energy security of the U.S.

\$400,000 for Crop Integration and Production research at SDSU. This program works to integrate pulse crops such as field peas, beans, and lentils, into northern plains production systems in order to diversify production opportunities and economic options for producers, and reduce off-farm nitrogen requirements - thereby reducing production costs.

\$563,000 for Ruminant Nutrition Consortium at SDSU. South Dakota State University leads the collaborative Four State Ruminant Consortium which includes South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming, and Montana. The objectives of this ongoing research and extension program are to add value to common grain and forage crops in the northern plains through ruminant livestock.

\$350,000 for Seed Technology Research at SDSU. The Seed Development Center at South Dakota State University provides training and the development of seed technology/biotechnology to support the safe delivery of traits to producer while protecting the traditional production systems. Seed will be the means for the continued specialization of crops with traits that enhance the value of our crops and the profitability for our producers.

\$401,000 for International Arid Lands Consortium. Competitive research programs conducted through the International Arid Lands Consortium focus on improving agricultural production and safeguarding natural resources in dry environments like those found in the western Great Plains.

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